

REMARKS

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-2 and 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art in view of Manning (US-6,364,685). Claims 3 and 6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Drawings

It is noted that the Examiner has accepted the drawings as originally filed with this application.

Claim Amendments

By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled claim 3 and has amended claims 1, 2 and 6. It is believed that the amended claims specifically set forth each element of Applicant's invention in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3 and 6 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicant's amended claim 1 comprises a combination of original claims 1 and 3, thus re-drafting claim 3 in independent form. Claims 2 and 4-6 all depend from amended claim 1. Claim 2 is amended to delete language that was duplicated in claim 3 which is now incorporated in amended claim 1.

In the absence of any art cited against Applicant's original claim 3, it is not believed that any detailed discussion of the cited prior art references is necessary. Suffice to say that all of the claims remaining in this patent application contain subject matter against which no prior art citations have been made.

Summary

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that this application is now in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should any points remain in issue, which the Examiner feels could best be resolved by either a personal or a telephone interview, it is urged that Applicant's local attorney be contacted at the exchange listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 16, 2004

By:



Bruce H. Troxell
Reg. No. 26,592

TROXELL LAW OFFICE PLLC
5205 Leesburg Pike, Suite 1404
Falls Church, Virginia 22041
Telephone: 703 575-2711
Telefax: 703 575-2707